

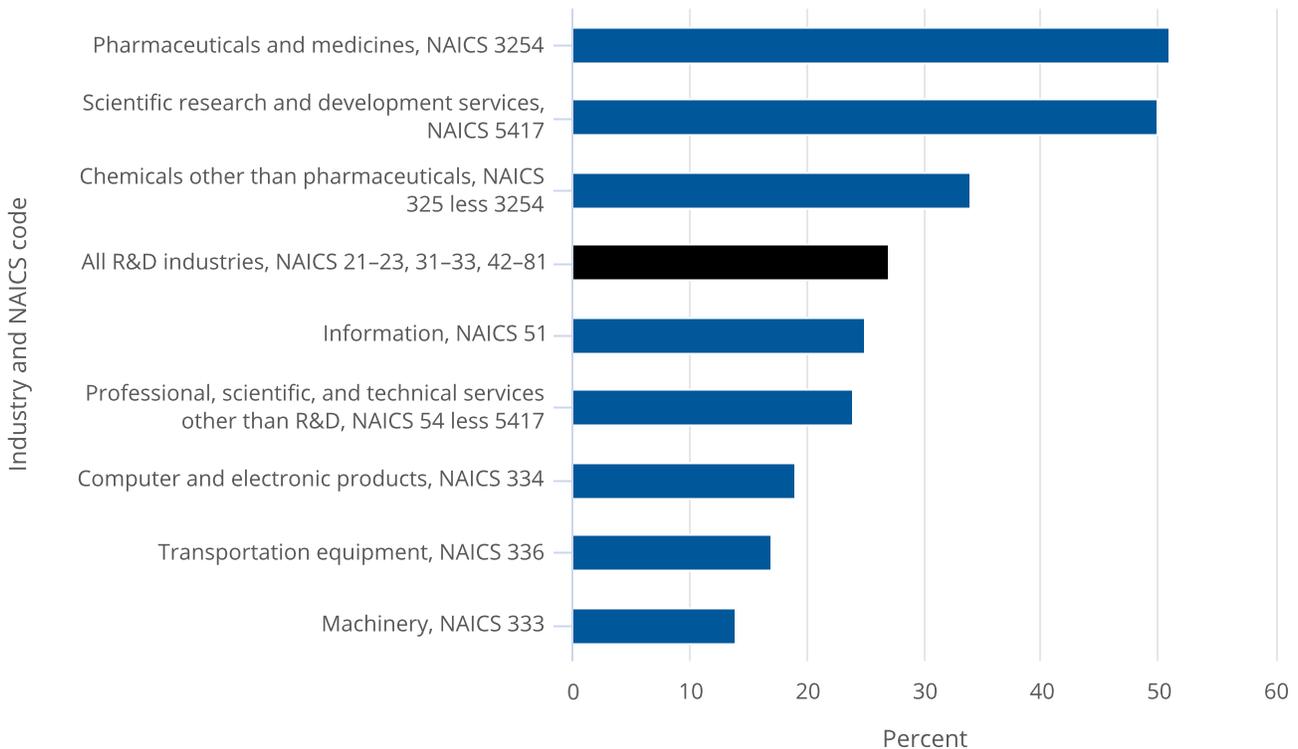


InfoChart

# Women Made Up Over a Quarter of All Business R&D Employees in 2020

NSF 23-328 | March 2023 | Gary Anderson and Brandon Shackelford

Figure 1 | Share of women in the U.S. business R&D workforce, by selected industry: 2020



NAICS = 2017 North American Industry Classification System.

Source(s): National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics and Census Bureau, Business Enterprise Research and Development Survey, 2020.

According to the 2020 Business Enterprise Research and Development Survey, 27% of U.S. business R&D employees were women. For all manufacturing subsectors and nonmanufacturing sectors with at least 100,000 R&D workers, the female share of R&D employment ranged from 14% to 47%. Women represented about half of all R&D employees in just two detailed industry groups that meet this employment threshold: pharmaceuticals and medicines (NAICS 3254, 51%) and scientific research and development services (NAICS 5417, 50%). Machinery (NAICS 333) and transportation equipment manufacturing (NAICS 336) had the two lowest shares of female R&D employees in this group of industries. Women made up about a quarter of the R&D employees in the information sector (NAICS 51) and in the professional, scientific, and technical services other than R&D sector (NAICS 54 less 5417).

Recent data show similar variation by field for degrees awarded to women in 2020 ([NSF 23-315, figure 7-3](#)). Women were awarded over 50% of the bachelor's (64%), master's (62%), and doctoral (53%) life sciences degrees. In contrast, women were underrepresented for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in engineering (24%, 27%, and 25%, respectively), mathematical and computer sciences (26%, 35%, and 26%, respectively), and physical and earth sciences (43%, 38%, and 34%, respectively).

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